

GENERAL ORDERS

No. 21

HEADQUARTERS
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON, DC, 23 April 1970

AWARD OF THE MEDAL OF HONOR



By direction of the President, under the Joint Resolution of Congress approved 12 July 1862 (amended by act of 3 March 1863, act of 9 July 1918 and act of 25 July 1963), the Medal of Honor for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty is awarded posthumously by the Department of the Army in the name of Congress to:



Sergeant *Ray McKibben*, , United States Army, who distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action above and beyond the call of duty while serving as team leader of the point element of a reconnaissance patrol of Troop B, 7th Squadron (Airmobile), 17th Cavalry operating in enemy territory near Song Mao in the Republic of Vietnam on 6 December 1968. Sergeant *McKibben* was leading his point element in a movement to contact along a well-traveled trail when the lead element came under heavy automatic weapons fire from a fortified bunker position, forcing the patrol to take cover. Sergeant *McKibben*, appraising the situation and without regard for his own safety, charged through bamboo and heavy brush to the fortified position, killed the enemy gunner, secured the weapon, and directed his patrol element forward. As the patrol moved out, Sergeant *McKibben* observed enemy movement to the flank of the patrol. Fire support from helicopter gunships was requested and the area was effectively neutralized. The patrol again continued its mission and as the lead element rounded the bend of a river it came under heavy automatic weapons fire from camouflaged bunkers. As Sergeant *McKibben* was deploying his men to covered positions, he observed one of his men fall wounded. Although bullets were hitting all around the wounded man, Sergeant *McKibben*, with complete disregard for his own safety, sprang to his comrade's side and under heavy enemy fire pulled him to safety behind the cover of a rock emplacement where he administered hasty first aid. Sergeant *McKibben*, seeing that his comrades were pinned down and were unable to deliver effective fire against the enemy bunkers, again undertook a singlehanded assault of the enemy defenses. He charged through the brush and hail of automatic weapons fire closing on the first bunker, killing the enemy with accurate rifle fire and securing the enemy's weapon. He continued his assault against the next bunker, firing his rifle as he charged. As he approached the second bunker his rifle ran out of ammunition; however, he used the captured enemy weapon until it, too, was empty, at which time he silenced the bunker with well-placed hand grenades. He reloaded his weapon and covered the advance of his men as they moved



forward. Observing the fire of another bunker impeding the patrol's advance, Sergeant *McKibben* again singlehandedly assaulted the new position. As he neared the bunker he was mortally wounded but was able to fire a final burst from his weapon killing the enemy and enabling the patrol to continue the assault. Sergeant *McKibben's* indomitable courage, extraordinary heroism, profound concern for the welfare of his fellow soldiers and disregard for his own personal safety saved the lives of his comrades and enabled the patrol to accomplish its mission. Sergeant *McKibben's* conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the cost of his life above and beyond the call of duty are in the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

By Order of the Secretary of the Army:

W. C. WESTMORELAND,
General, United States Army,
Chief of Staff.

Official:

KENNETH G. WICKHAM,
Major General, United States Army,
The Adjutant General.

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